



Docket No. 29-1

IN THE APPLICATION

OF

ENRICO EMILIO MASSETTI

FOR AN

AUDIENCE RATING SYSTEM FOR DIGITAL TELEVISION AND RADIO

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AUDIENCE RATING SYSTEM FOR DIGITAL TELEVISION AND RADIO

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. FIELD OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to methods and apparatus for audience rating systems for digital television and radio.

2. DESCRIPTION OF THE PRIOR ART

The television and radio industries and commercial advertisers have an obvious interest in knowing how many people are watching or listening to particular stations and programs. Various systems of audience rating have been developed for analog television and radio, of which the most accurate use a meter that is connected to the television set or radio, that records when the receiver is turned on and off, and what channels or frequencies it is tuned to. Digital television and radio are now being introduced, and are expected to eventually completely replace analog television and radio. The existing rating devices for analog television and radio either will not work at all with digital television and radio, or

will work only poorly. The present invention is a method of audience rating for digital television and radio, that uses an apparatus that can be connected to a digital television set or radio. It makes use of identification codes in the control stream of multiplexed digital transmissions to record the channel being received.

U.S. Patent No. 4,547,804, issued on October 15, 1985, to Burton L. Greenberg, discloses a method and apparatus for the automatic identification and verification of commercial broadcast programs. A digital encoded identifying number is embedded in the programs, by which they can be automatically monitored, to verify that they have been broadcast as and when intended. However, the digital number is embedded in what is otherwise an analog program. This method is usable only during the transition period from analog to digital broadcasting technology, when some digital equipment or connection is in use together with older analog equipment or connections. It will not work when the broadcasting stations have fully digital operations, e.g., recording a program in digital form, storing it digitally on tape or disk, performing nonlinear digital edits and digital commercial insertions, and transmitting digitally in the air, or delivering a digital stream to a cable or satellite operator to multiplex with other digital streams. The

instant invention is distinguishable, in that it is fully digital and will work with broadcasting that is fully digital, and it is designed for audience ratings, rather than broadcast verification.

U.S. Patent No. 4,647,974, issued on March 3, 1987, to Robert J. Butler and Ronald G. Schlameuss, discloses a system for the automatic insertion of auxiliary video information into an analog television signal. The system may be used by a local station to insert its call letters or logo into network programming. The instant invention is distinguishable, in that it uses digital signals in digital broadcasts, and is designed to monitor receivers.

U.S. Patent No. 4,697,209, issued on September 29, 1987, to David Kiewit and Daozheng Lu, discloses a method and apparatus for identifying television programs, by detecting the occurrence of events such as scene changes in a video signal, and extracting a signature from the signal. Signatures and their times of occurrence are stored and compared with reference signatures to identify the program. As the system is independent of the format used to transmit the signal, it will work with both analog and digital television. It has the disadvantage of requiring that a large volume of reference data be collected for every possible station and program being transmitted, and for every site

monitored, which will require a large computing capacity and a long computing time to correlate the two sets of data to determine which station or program is being received at each monitored site at each instant that each receiver is turned on. The instant invention is distinguishable, in that it is designed to monitor the reception of digital transmissions only, and will work efficiently with such transmissions, by using identification codes in their control streams.

U.S. Patent No. 4,972,503, issued on November 20, 1990, to Everett V. Zurlinden, discloses a method and apparatus for determining the channel to which a remotely controlled television receiver is tuned. While it is independent of the format (analog or digital) used to transmit the signal, its implementation on a mass scale for audience ratings will not be practical, as it requires an individual hardware or software adaptation to each remote control used in the monitored sites to determine what function is activated when a key pressing is detected. The instant invention is distinguishable, in that requires no such adaptation to remote controls, and may be implemented even if a remote control is not used.

U.S. Patent No. 5,019,899, issued on May 28, 1991, to Glenn M. Boles et al., discloses an electronic data encoding and recognition

system for creating digital signatures from frames of selected video segments such as television commercials by a digitalizing, compression and selection process which produces a multi-digit signature from each frame. The instant invention is distinguishable, in that it uses digital signals in digital broadcasts, and may be used to monitor receivers.

U.S. Patent No. 5,278,988, issued on January 11, 1994, to Jean P. Dejean, Enrico Massetti, Ken Straub and Everett Zurlinden, discloses a method and apparatus for determining the transmitting station from which analog program signals are received and translated by a monitored receiver within a test area. The instant invention is distinguishable, in that it is designed to detect and record the reception of digital transmissions by digital receivers.

U.S. Patent No. 5,425,100, issued on June 13, 1995, to William L. Thomas, Paul C. Kempter and David H. Harkness, discloses a multi-level encoded signal monitoring system and a universal broadcast code for identifying programs, commercial, networks, stations, etc. The instant invention is distinguishable, in that it is designed for and will work with fully digital programming, and does not require multiple levels of encoding.

U.S. Patent No. 5,450,122, issued on September 12, 1995, to Leonard D. Keene, discloses an in-station method and apparatus for

encoding analog television programs, including commercials, with a digital identification code recorded on a selected video scan line which is not normally visible to the television viewer, and for verifying the proper airing of such programs by television broadcast stations. The instant invention is distinguishable, in that it is designed for determining audience ratings for digital television and radio.

U.S. Patent No. 5,450,490, issued on September 12, 1995, to James M. Jensen et al., discloses apparatus and methods for including an inaudible code in an analog audio signal, and for decoding it. The instant invention is distinguishable, in that it uses identification codes in the control streams of multiplexed digital transmissions.

U.S. Patent No. 5,512,933, issued on April 30, 1996, to Mark A. Wheatley and Peter Wilcox, discloses a system for identifying a program stream being displayed at a receiver location, by measuring the relative luminance of a plurality of predetermined areas in each frame of a television transmission, at both the transmitting station and the receiver. As the system is independent of the format used to transmit the signal, it will work with both analog and digital television. But, as with *Kiewit et al.*, *supra*, it has the disadvantage of requiring that a large volume of reference data

be collected for every possible station and program being transmitted, and for every site monitored, as well as requiring a large computing capacity and a long computing time to correlate the two sets of data to determine which station or program has been received at each monitored site at each instant that the receiver was turned on. As before, the instant invention is distinguishable, in that it is designed to monitor the reception of digital transmissions only, and will work efficiently with such transmissions, by using identification codes in their control streams.

U.S. Patent No. 5,574,962, issued on November 12, 1996, to Michel Fardeau et al., discloses a method and apparatus for automatically identifying a program, by adding an inaudible encoded message to the audio signal. The instant invention is distinguishable, in that it is designed for multiplexed digital transmissions, and uses identification codes already present in their control streams.

U.S. Patent No. 5,646,675, issued on July 8, 1997, to Robert C. Copriviza et al., discloses a system and method for monitoring the reception of video program material, using codes inserted on scan lines. Again, the instant invention is distinguishable, in that it is designed for multiplexed digital transmissions, and

uses identification codes already present in their control streams.

None of the above inventions and patents, taken either singly or in combination, is seen to describe the instant invention as claimed.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention is an audience rating system for digital television and radio, using identification codes in control streams of time-multiplexed digital transmissions. When a television set or radio, that is being monitored pursuant to the system, is turned on and tuned into a channel, and each time that the channel is changed, an identification code for each audio, video or auxiliary digital stream of the channel is extracted from the control stream, and recorded along with the time. The time is also recorded when the television set or radio is turned off. This data makes it possible to determine what stations, channels, and programs members of the audience being monitored are watching or listening to at any particular time. In the first preferred embodiment, the multiplexed digital transmission is received separately by the television set or radio (or an attached integrated receiver and decoder) and a meter connected to it. The meter compares the

elementary digital streams of the channel being received by the television set or radio with digital streams of each of the channels in the multiplexed digital transmission, until it finds a match. In the second preferred embodiment, the meter does not receive the multiplexed digital transmission separately, but has access to an elementary stream extracted from the multiplexed digital transmission by an integrated receiver and decoder. In both embodiments, the meter extracts identification codes for the channels being received from the elementary stream. The elementary stream may be accessed through an auxiliary connector in a digital decoder, through an access control card connector, or through soldering electrical connections to internal points in the integrated receiver and decoder. In either embodiment, the digital transmission may be either a terrestrial or satellite broadcast, or by cable. The data recorded may be stored on-site in the meter's memory, and/or transmitted to a central computer for immediate processing. While designed as an audience rating system, the invention may also be used in recording reception of, and billing customers for, pay-per-view digital television programs (or even "pay-per-listen" digital radio programs, should any be developed).

Accordingly, it is a principal object of the invention to provide an efficient means of creating reliable audience rating

reports for digital television.

It is another object of the invention to provide an efficient means of creating reliable audience rating reports for digital radio.

5 It is a further object of the invention to provide a means for recording reception of digital programs for which a fee is charged to the consumer.

It is an object of the invention to provide improved elements and arrangements thereof in an apparatus for the purposes described which is inexpensive, dependable and fully effective in accomplishing its intended purposes.

These and other objects of the present invention will become readily apparent upon further review of the following specification and drawings.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Fig. 1 is a flowchart showing the method of the first preferred embodiment of the invention.

Fig. 2 is a schematic diagram showing the apparatus used in the first preferred embodiment of the invention.

receiver. (IRDs are now generally separate units attached outside the receiver. But it is expected that eventually they will be placed inside digital receivers during manufacture.) Both the IRD and the receiver must then identify the control stream (sometimes also called the system stream) in the multiplexed digital transmission.

The next step is demultiplexing the multiplexed digital transmission into separate digital streams. The control stream is used to allocate digital frames to the separate digital streams. In digital television the separate digital streams include at least one video stream for each channel, at least one audio stream for each channel, the control stream itself, and may also include auxiliary streams for each channel. (In digital radio there is, of course, no video stream.) (As used in this application, a "channel" means one or more digital streams that transmit only one program or commercial advertisement at a time, and applies to digital radio as well as television.) Identification codes in the control stream are used to cause only the digital streams of the channel to which the receiver is tuned to be passed to the receiver, so that the channel's audio digital streams are converted to sound, and the channel's video digital streams are converted to pictures.

When the meter receives a signal indicating that the receiver has been turned on, or that the channel that the receiver is tuned to has been changed, the meter selects one or more audio, video and/or auxiliary digital streams belonging to a first channel in the multiplexed digital transmission for comparison with the digital streams of the channel to which the receiver is tuned. If the comparison shows that the digital streams are identical, the meter then extracts the identification codes of the streams that match from the control stream. If the digital streams are not identical, the meter selects digital streams belonging to the next channel for comparison, and continues selecting and comparing digital streams belonging to each channel in the multiplexed digital transmission, until a match is found, and the identification codes of the matching digital streams received by the meter are extracted from the control stream received by the meter. The identification codes extracted are recorded by the meter, along with the time and date. (If no match is found, a message that the digital stream cannot be identified may be recorded.) (Alternatively, the meter may continuously compare the digital streams in each of the channels in the multiplexed digital transmission to the digital streams in the channel to which the receiver is tuned, and extract and record the identification codes

and the time and date whenever the continuous comparison shows that the channel has been changed.) The meter also records the time and date when the receiver is turned off or reception is otherwise ended. Assuming that the times each program and each commercial are transmitted on each channel belonging to each station are known, the data recorded by the meter makes it possible to determine what stations, channels, programs and commercials members of the audience being monitored are watching or listening to at any particular time.

Figure 2 is a schematic diagram showing the apparatus used in the first preferred embodiment of the invention. The digital television station 10 broadcasts (or transmits by cable) a time-multiplexed digital stream 12 containing segments of a control stream C, a video stream V, and an audio stream A. (In practice many video and audio streams would normally be broadcast together in a single time-multiplexed stream, but for the sake of clarity, only a single channel with one of each is shown.) The multiplexed stream is then received and demultiplexed by an integrated receiver and decoder 14 into the control stream (not shown), the video stream 16, and the audio stream 18. The meter 20 independently receives the same multiplexed stream, and likewise demultiplexes it into the control stream and video and audio streams. The video

stream of the channel selected is passed to both the cathode ray tube 22 (or liquid crystal display or other visual display device) and the meter, which compares it to each video stream in the multiplexed digital stream. The audio stream of the channel selected is passed to both the speaker 24 and the meter, which compares it to each audio stream in the multiplexed digital stream. (Of course, in the case of radio, there are no video streams to be compared). The video stream received causes pictures to be displayed by the visual display device, and the audio stream received causes sounds to be emitted by the speaker. Information recorded by the meter may be stored in an internal memory unit for later retrieval. Optionally, in order to instantly generate audience ratings in real time, information recorded in the meter may be transmitted by a cable 26 or other means to a computer 28 where data from many different receivers being simultaneously monitored may be compiled.

Fig. 3 is a flowchart showing the method of the second preferred embodiment of the invention. In the second embodiment, only the IRD receives a multiplexed digital transmission, identifies its control stream, and demultiplexes the separate digital streams. As in the first embodiment, the IRD uses identification codes in the control stream to select the audio and

video streams in the channel to which the receiver is tuned, and passes the streams to the receiver, where they are converted into sound and/or pictures. The IRD extracts the elementary stream for the channel (i.e., the audio, video and auxiliary streams for the channel, and the identification codes for these streams) and makes it available on an auxiliary connector (usually for the purpose of descrambling a controlled access channel) and passes it to the meter, which extracts the identification codes, and records them along with the time and date when the receiver is turned on or the channel that the receiver is tuned to is changed. As before, the meter also records the time when the receiver is turned off or reception is otherwise ended.

Fig. 4 is a schematic diagram showing the apparatus used in the second preferred embodiment of the invention, showing that the multiplexed digital transmission 12 is received only by the IRC 14, which passes the elementary stream 30 (including an audio stream, a video stream, and identification codes) for the channel to which the receiver is tuned to the meter 20. In the second embodiment, the elementary stream may be accessed by the meter through an auxiliary connector in a digital decoder, or through an access control card connector, or by soldering an electrical connection to an internal point in the IRD.

In either embodiment, it is possible that a plurality of multiplexed digital transmissions can be received at different frequencies. In this case, when the receiver is turned on, the meter records a first frequency received, and the time reception of the first frequency begins, and when the frequency received is changed, the meter records any subsequent frequency received, and the time reception of the subsequent frequency begins.

Auxiliary streams for a channel may carry binary strings or text characters, by means of which information concerning the station or program being transmitted may be displayed by the receiver. Information concerning programs and/or stations may be displayed in a menu to enable viewers to select transmissions, or to enable viewer to see which transmissions have been selected.

The invention is primarily designed and intended for use in compiling audience rating reports, but may also be used in recording reception of, and billing customers for, pay-per-view digital television programs (or even "pay-per-listen" digital radio programs, should any be developed).

It is to be understood that the present invention is not limited to the preferred embodiments described above, but encompasses any and all embodiments within the scope of the following claims.

CLAIMS

I claim:

1. An audience rating system for digital television and radio, comprising the steps of:

extracting at least one identification code for at least one digital stream of a first channel, from a control stream of a multiplexed digital transmission, when reception of the first channel by a receiver begins;

recording at least one identification code extracted and the time reception of the first channel begins;

extracting at least one identification code for at least one digital stream of any subsequent channel, from the control stream of the multiplexed digital transmission, when reception of the subsequent channel by the receiver begins;

recording at least one identification code extracted and the time reception of the subsequent channel begins; and

recording the time that reception by the receiver is ended.

2. An audience rating system for digital television and radio according to claim 1, wherein the multiplexed digital transmission is received separately by the receiver and by a meter;

when the receiver is turned on, and when the channel that the receiver is tuned to is changed, the meter compares digital streams of the channel that the receiver is tuned to, to digital streams of each of the channels in the multiplexed digital transmission, until it finds a match and extracts at least one identification code for at least one digital stream of the channel from the control stream, and records the identification code along with the time; and

when reception by the receiver is ended, the meter records the time.

3. An audience rating system for digital television and radio according to claim 2, wherein a plurality of multiplexed digital transmissions can be received at different frequencies;

when the receiver is turned on, the meter records a first frequency received, and the time reception of the first frequency begins; and

when the frequency received is changed, the meter records any subsequent frequency received, and the time reception of the subsequent frequency begins.

9. An audience rating system for digital television and radio according to claim 2, wherein at least one digital stream is a video transmission.

10. An audience rating system for digital television and radio according to claim 1, wherein

when the receiver is turned on, and when the channel that the receiver is tuned to is changed, an elementary stream is extracted from the multiplexed digital transmission, the elementary stream is passed to a meter, the meter extracts at least one identification code from the elementary stream, and the meter records the identification code along with the time; and

when reception by the receiver is ended, the meter records the time.

11. An audience rating system for digital television and radio according to claim 10, wherein the control stream is accessed by the meter through an auxiliary connector in a digital decoder.

12. An audience rating system for digital television and radio according to claim 10, wherein the control stream is accessed by the meter through an access control card connector.

13. An audience rating system for digital television and radio according to claim 10, wherein a plurality of multiplexed digital transmissions can be received at different frequencies;

when the receiver is turned on, the meter records a first frequency received, and the time reception of the first frequency begins; and

when the frequency received is changed, the meter records any subsequent frequency received, and the time reception of the subsequent frequency begins.

14. An audience rating system for digital television and radio according to claim 10, wherein the multiplexed digital transmission is transmitted by electromagnetic radiation.

15. An audience rating system for digital television and radio according to claim 10, wherein the multiplexed digital transmission is transmitted by electricity.

16. An audience rating system for digital television and radio according to claim 10, wherein data recorded by the meter are stored in a memory unit of the meter.

17. An audience rating system for digital television and radio according to claim 10, wherein data recorded by the meter are transmitted to a computer.

18. An audience rating system for digital television and radio according to claim 10, wherein at least one digital stream is an audio transmission.

19. An audience rating system for digital television and radio according to claim 10, wherein at least one digital stream is a video transmission.

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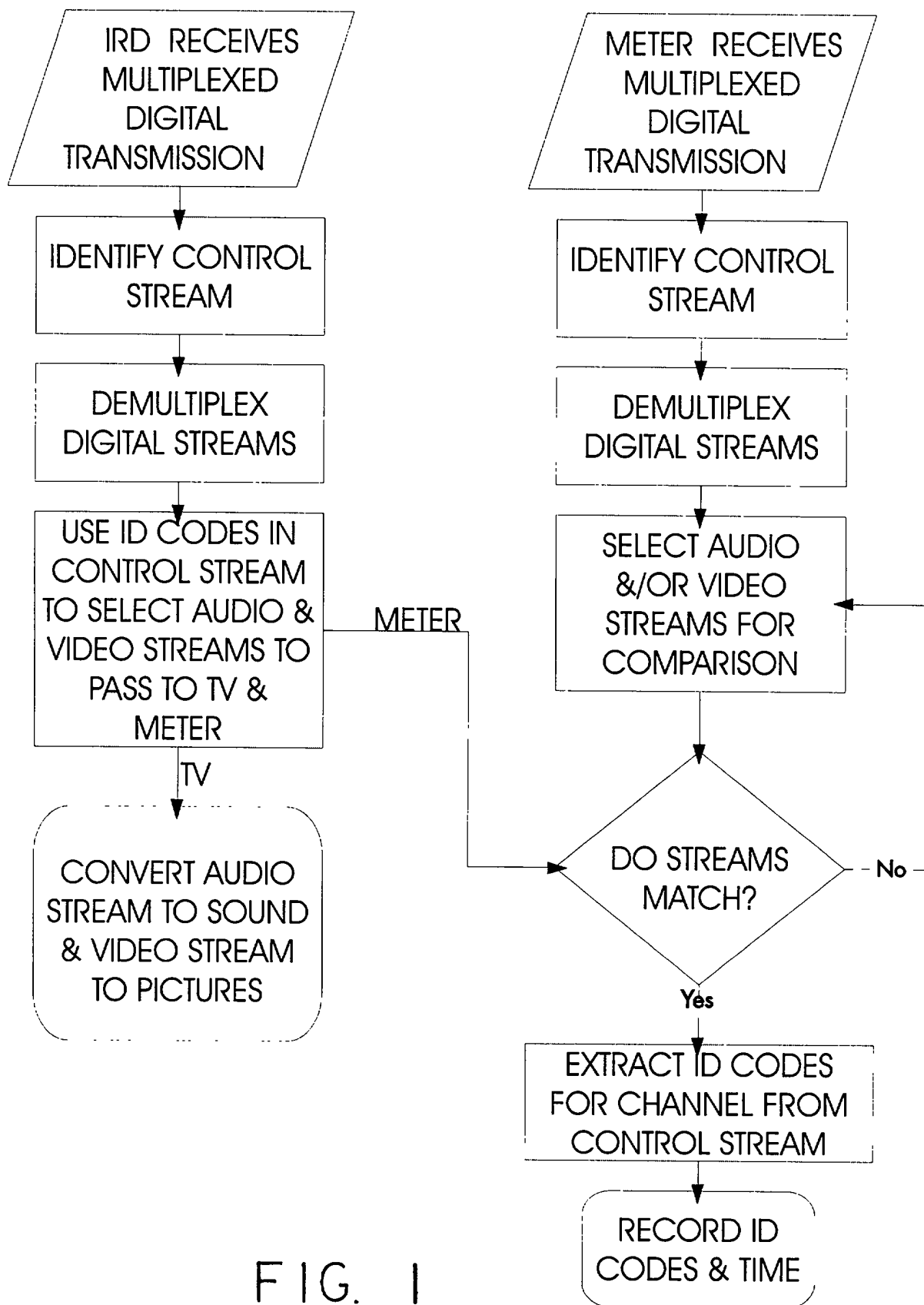
recording at least one identification code extracted and the
time reception of the first channel begins;

recording at least one identification code extracted and the time reception of the subsequent channel begins; and

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A diagram showing a point source (a black dot) emitting waves (curved lines). A cone is drawn with its vertex at the source, and it is labeled with the number 10. The letter H is also present in the diagram.



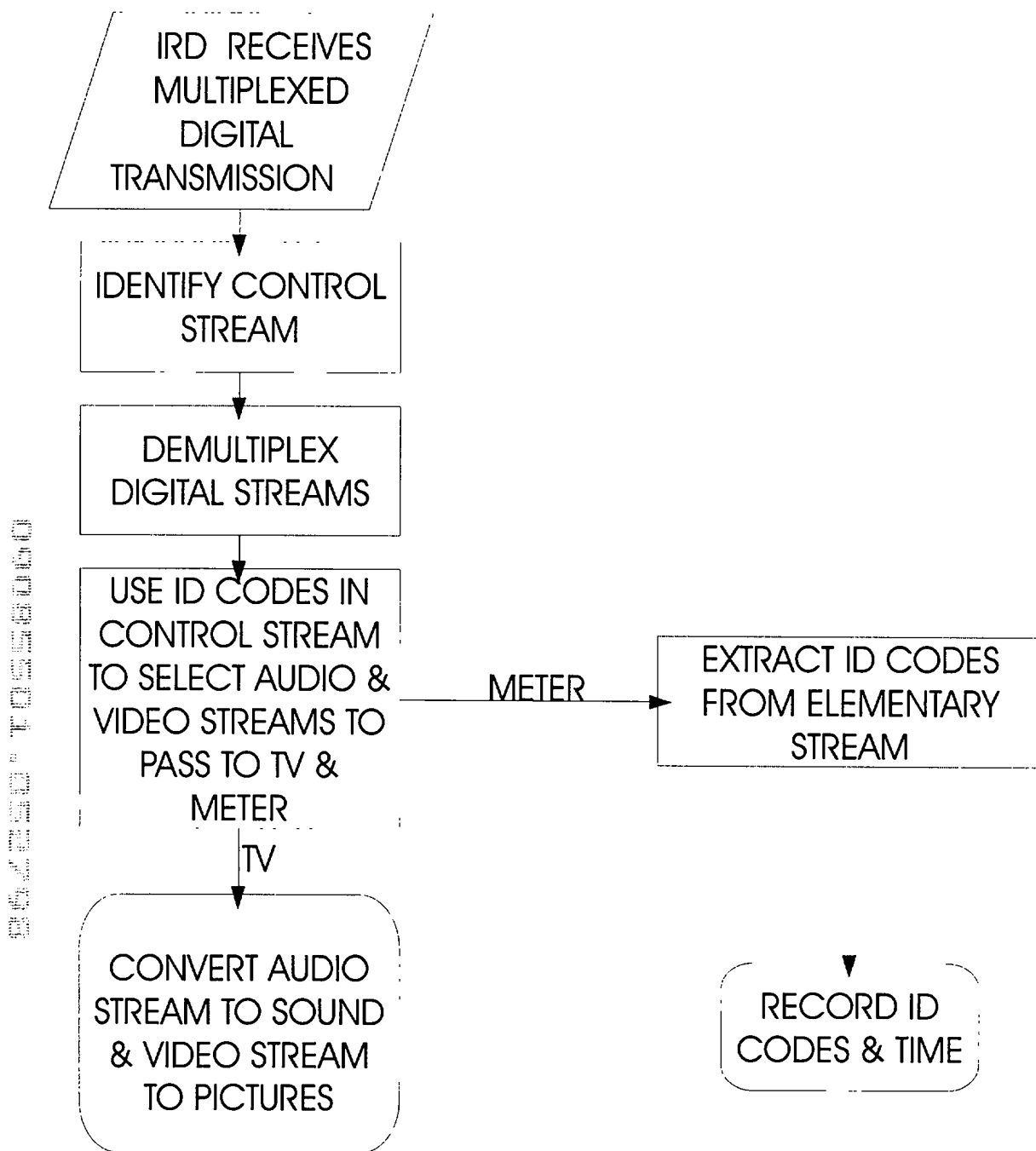
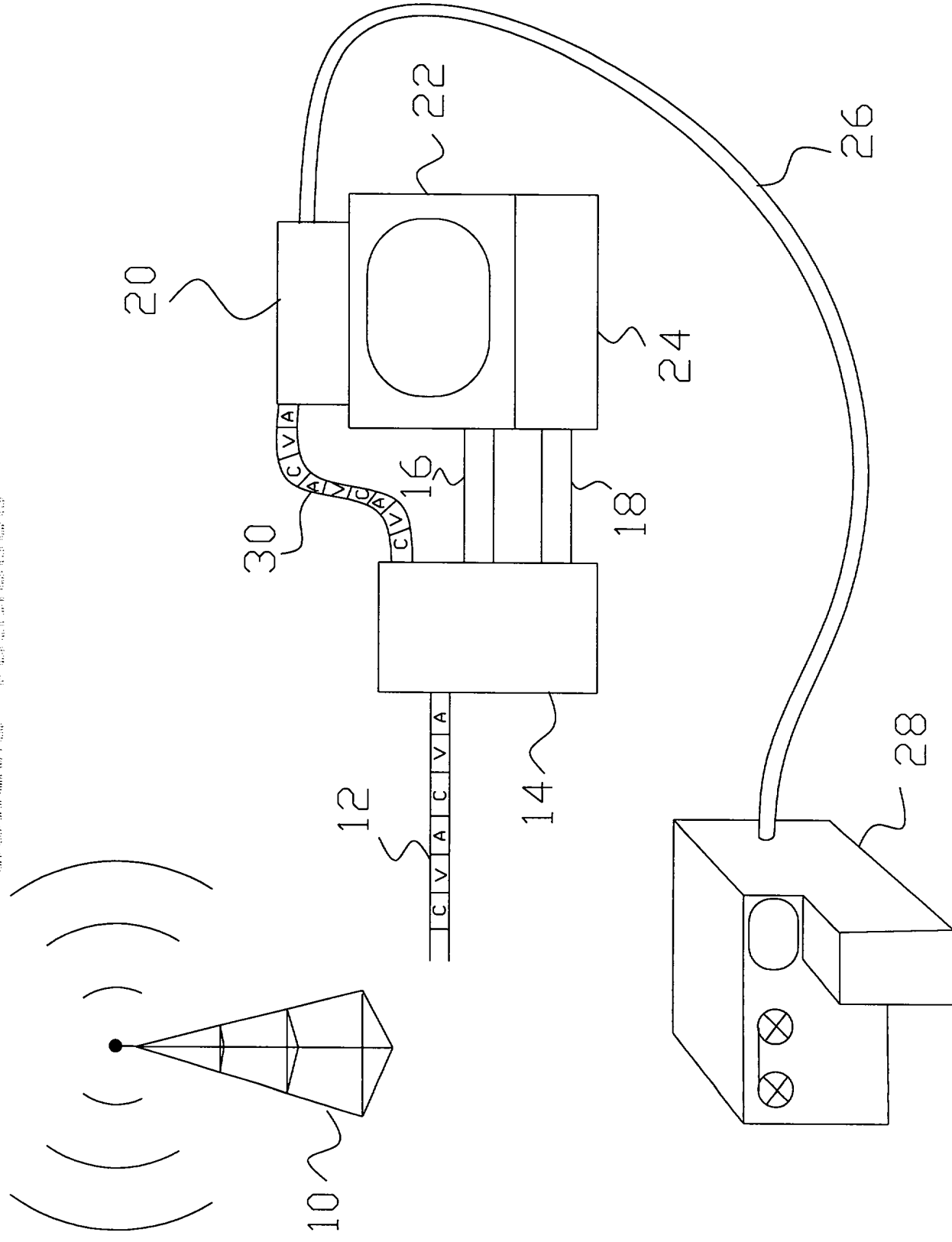


FIG. 3



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COMBINED DECLARATION AND POWER OF ATTORNEY

As the below named inventor, I hereby declare that:

TYPE OF DECLARATION

This declaration is of the following type:

☒ original
☐ design
☐ substitution
☐ divisional
☐ continuation
☐ continuation-in-part (CIP)

INVENTORSHIP IDENTIFICATION

My residence, post office address, and citizenship are as stated below next to my name, I believe that I am the original, first and sole inventor (if only one name is listed below) or an original, first and joint inventor (if plural names are listed below) on the subject matter which is claimed and for which a patent is sought on the invention entitled:

TITLE OF INVENTION

AUDIENCE RATING SYSTEM FOR DIGITAL TELEVISION AND RADIO

SPECIFICATION IDENTIFICATION

the specification of which: (complete (a) or (b))

- (a) ☒ is attached hereto.
- (b) _____ was filed on _____ as
Application Serial No. _____
and was amended on _____
(if applicable)

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF REVIEW OF PAPERS AND DUTY OF CANDOR

I hereby state that I have reviewed and understand the contents of the above-identified specification, including the claims, as amended by any amendment referred to above.

I acknowledge the duty to disclose information which is material to the examination of this application in accordance with Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations 1.56(a). I further acknowledge the duty to disclose material information as defined in Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations 1.56(a), which

occurred between the filing date of the prior application and the national or PCT international filing date of this continuation-in-part application.

I hereby claim foreign priority benefits under Title 35, United States Code, Section 119 of any foreign application(s) for patent or inventor's certificate listed below and have also identified below any foreign application for patent or inventor's certificates having a filing date before that of the application on which priority is claimed:

Prior Foreign Application(s), if applicable: Priority Claimed

Number	Country	Day/Mo./Yr. Filed	Yes	No
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POWER OF ATTORNEY

As a named inventor, I hereby appoint the following attorney to prosecute this application and transact all business in the Patent and Trademark Office connected therewith.

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issued thereon.

SIGNATURES

Full Name of Sole Inventor: ENRICO EMILIO MASSETTI

Signature: Enrico E. Masetti

Date: 5/26/98 Countries of Citizenship: United States and Italy

Residence: 2432 Treemont Way, Dunedin, Florida 34698

Post Office Address: Same

Attorney Docket No. 29-1

**VERIFIED STATEMENT (DECLARATION) CLAIMING SMALL ENTITY STATUS
(37 CFR 1.9(f) and 1.27(b))--INDEPENDENT INVENTOR**

As the below named inventor, I hereby declare that I qualify as an independent inventor as defined in 37 CFR 1.9 (c) for purposes of paying reduced fees under section 41 (a) and (b) of Title 35, United States Code, to the Patent and Trademark Office with regard to the invention entitled below and in:

AUDIENCE RATING SYSTEM FOR DIGITAL TELEVISION AND RADIO

 X the specification filed herewith.

I have not assigned, granted, conveyed, or licensed and am under no obligation under contract or law to assign, grant, convey or license, any rights in the invention to any person who could not be classified as an independent inventor under 37 CFR 1.9 (c) if that person had made the invention, or to any concern which would not qualify as a small business concern under 37 CFR 1.9 (d) or a nonprofit organization under 37 CFR 1.9 (e).

Each person, concern or organization to which I have assigned, granted, conveyed, or licensed or am under an obligation under contract or law to assign, grant, convey, or license any rights in the invention is listed below:

 X no such person, concern or organization

I acknowledge the duty to file, in this application or patent, notification of any change in status resulting in loss of entitlement to small entity status prior to paying, or at the time of paying, the earliest of the issue fee or any maintenance fee due after the date on which status as a small business entity is no longer appropriate. (37 CFR 1.28 (b)).

I hereby declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements are made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code, and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application, any patent issuing thereon, or any patent to which this verified statement is directed.

ENRICO EMILIO MASSETTI
Name of Sole Inventor

Enrico E. Massetti
Signature of Sole Inventor

Date 5/26/98